

My name is Gary J. Morford, co-owner of Green Acre Farms, Inc. Graduated from Washington State University with a degree in Agricultural Mechanization. During my time at WSU, I took many Ag Econ classes, including Dr. Fawell's AG ECON 450 class, but I didn't do quite as well as Mr. Smith.

I'm also a 4th generation hop farmer. I came back from college to start farming with my dad in 1978, so my experience with the old Hop Marketing Order is limited.

I was surprised to hear, in Oregon, from Paul Forbert, when he was on the stand, that his father and grandfather farmed 200 acres of hops for 30-40 years, never changing the amount of acreage. Yet today, Mr. Forbert is farming 115 acres, a significant drop.

When the order came out in the 60's, my Dad was farming under 200 acres of hops and by the end of the order in 1986, he was farming just under 1000 acres. He probably was one of the largest buyers of base during the marketing order years. He was never really for the order, although he did take full advantage of the opportunities that were available. He was one of the few that played the spot market continuously and came out ahead.

Since the end of the marketing order Green Acre Farms has grown in the fruit industry as well as in the hops. During the marketing order years, hops comprised 100% of our business, but today, they comprise just 40%.

During the last 10 years, I have seen many changes in Green Acre Farms and our industry, in varieties, as well as in sales opportunities. Where as this hop market used to have both highs and lows, (not taking into account the fires of 2000), the highs are not very high or consistent and the lows are very low and very consistent.

Contrary to what some people may believe, as a large hop grower, I prefer to have as many growers in our industry as possible. The market situation is always helped by more sales.

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Today, a select few growers set the market each year at a low price. I hear some growers indicate that they are efficient farmers, but it appears that they are waiting for other growers to go out of business, as if that was the only option for them to survive.

I have been involved for the last two years, to the full extent, in "set aside" programs, as Mr. Roy indicated previously. But I have stayed out of this current marketing order process because of non-compliance of other growers to be mandated and my own "Leave us alone" attitude. Up to two months ago, I probably would have voted against this order without reading it, but after listening to testimony from Oregon growers, and breweries, and having observed how this process works, I am throwing my support to the Marketing Order. I ask the USDA committee to give a chance to the growers to vote and to finish this process.

Also, I would like to see one vote/one farm be implemented. As a larger grower, we have one vote as well. Green Acre Farms has NOT broken into smaller entities so that we could have stronger voting power. I had thought that I was the only one with this philosophy, but I was pleased to find that Mr. Roy shares this view.

If the USDA can spend this much time and money leading into the option to vote, I'd like to see them spend equal time investigating each operation to implement the one vote/one farm policy.

Thank you to the USDA board and the judge for giving me the opportunity to voice my opinion today.

Gary J. Mozford